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USAID Supports Women Candidate Debates

Phnom Penh
May 22, 2008



USAID Mission Director Erin Soto, NDI Country Director Jerome Cheung, and women candidate from CPP, FCP and NRP during the Women's Public Forum: Listening to Citizen at University of Cambodia, May 22, 2008.

On May 22, 2008 – Over 350 Cambodians attended women candidates from three of Cambodia's major political parties participated in a USAID-funded Debate designed to highlight the importance of female leaders. The event, staged in Phnom Penh, was the 13th and final Women's Forum to be held throughout Cambodia as the country gears up for a national election in July. The forums provided potential

candidates with the opportunity to develop their public-speaking, campaign-organizing and message-development skills, and they also offered citizens a rare opportunity to ask pointed questions about issues affecting their daily lives. Over 9, 000 people attended the 13 events and more than one million listened on the radio. As a result of USAID and donor community support, 22,000 women ran for public office in last year's Commune Council elections, double the number that ran in the previous local election in 2002.